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come under observation. A committee of French citizens has also been organized in close cooperation with the government, and appeals have been made to us on behalf of the work undertaken by this committee.

In response to the appeals we have received, our representatives have made a careful preliminary study of the situation, and the trustees of the Rockefeller Foundation have been so impressed with the gravity of the need that they have decided to take steps to ascertain definitely the lines along which American sympathy and generosity can be made most effective. With this end in view, they have sought to find the man who in all the country was best qualified both as a physician and as a public health administrator to study the situation in France and to determine the lines along which help could best be given.

They have had no difficulty in making up their minds that Dr. Herman M. Biggs was the man whose character and attainments best fulfilled the requirements of the case. They realized that it would be asking a great deal of Dr. Biggs to make the sacrifice involved in a visit to France, and that the state of New York had the first claim on his services. They felt, however, that if it should be the happy result of Dr. Biggs's going to France that the benefits of his long and wonderfully fruitful service in New York could be availed of in the organization of the campaign in that country, the effect in terms of human welfare would be so large and far-reaching as to constitute a very strong claim both on his public spirit and upon the generosity of the state of New York.

During Dr. Biggs's absence Dr. Linsly R. Williams, deputy commissioner, will be acting commissioner; Dr. Matthias Nicoll, Jr., now secretary of the board, will be acting deputy commissioner, and Dr. John A. Smith, at present sanitary supervisor, will act as secretary.

#### THE NATIONAL PARKS CONFERENCE

UNDER the auspices of the National Park Service of the Department of the Interior there was held in the auditorium of the New National Museum, Washington, D. C., on January 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6, 1917, a National Parks Conference, at which many important papers and lectures were presented. The program included:

Our National Parks: Franklin K. Lane, secretary of the interior; Senator Reed Smoot, of

Utah; Representative Scott Ferris, of Oklahoma; Representative Irvine L. Lenroot, of Wisconsin; Carl Vrooman, assistant secretary of agriculture; Enos Mills.

Canadian National Parks: J. B. Harkin, commissioner of Dominion Parks, department of the interior, Canada.

The Public and the National Parks: Huston Thompson, Jr., assistant attorney general.

University Classes in the National Parks: Professor E. M. Lehnerts, of the University of Minnesota.

Public Schools and the National Parks: Philander P. Claxton, U. S. Commissioner of Education.

National Parks as a Scientific Asset: Dr. Charles D. Walcott, secretary, Smithsonian Institution.

Teaching by Picture: Gilbert H. Grosvenor, editor, *National Geographic Magazine*.

The Painter and the National Parks: William H. Holmes, head curator, National Gallery of Art.

The Photographer and the National Parks: Fred H. Kiser.

National Forests and National Parks in Wild Life Conservation: Henry S. Graves, forester and chief, Forest Service.

The Yellowstone Elk Herds: E. W. Nelson, chief of the Bureau of Biological Survey.

Future of the Antelope: E. Lester Jones, superintendent, Coast and Geodetic Survey.

National Monuments as Wild Animal Sanctuaries: T. S. Palmer, assistant in charge of Game Preservation, Bureau of Biological Survey.

Colossus of Canyons: Representative Simeon D. Fess, of Ohio.

The Survey's Contribution to the National Park Movement: Dr. George Otis Smith, director, U. S. Geological Survey.

The Problem of the Greater Sequoia: Representative Frederick H. Gillett, of Massachusetts.

Perhaps Our Greatest National Park: Enos Mills.

The Tehipite Valley and Kings Canyon: Robert Sterling Yard.

The Top of America—Mount Whitney: Emerson Hough.

#### A FRENCH NATIONAL PHYSICAL LABORATORY

THE question of national laboratories of scientific research has been brought forward recently in France. In the *Comptes rendus* of the Academy of Sciences for November 13, as summarized in *Nature*, is a preliminary

report by a committee composed of MM. Jordan, Lippmann, Emile Picard, d'Arsonval, Haller, A. Lacroix, Tisserand and Le Chatelier on this question. It is pointed out that all the great industrial nations possess national laboratories of scientific research, systematically directed towards the study of technical problems. The National Physical Laboratory in England, the Bureau of Standards and the Carnegie Institution in the United States, the Physikalische Reichsanstalt and the institutes founded by the Wilhelm Gesellschaft in Germany are given as examples. France has no corresponding institution, and after a full discussion of the questions of control, staff, and work to be done, the following resolution was unanimously carried:

The Academy of Sciences, convinced of the necessity of organizing in France, in a systematic manner, certain scientific researches, expresses its wish that a National Physical Laboratory should be started, for the prosecution of scientific researches useful to the progress of industry. As in other countries, this laboratory would be placed under the control and direction of the Academy of Sciences.

On November 27 this question was further considered by the academy, and it was suggested that the general direction of the laboratory should be entrusted to a council, one half of the members to be nominated by the academy, one quarter representatives of the state departments, and the remaining quarter delegated by the principal industrial interests. Certain existing state laboratories might be affiliated to the national laboratory. A considerable grant for establishment and maintenance will be necessary.

#### DEDICATION OF THE NEW YORK STATE MUSEUM

ALTHOUGH the New York State Museum at Albany has been open to the public for some months past, it seemed wise to the regents of the university to bring the public into closer touch with the new museum by formal dedicatory exercises. These took place in the chancellors' hall of the education building at Albany on the afternoon and evening of Friday, December 29. The afternoon exercises consisted of a series of addresses from eminent

speakers, each representing a special phase of community interest in the museum. The Honorable Charles B. Alexander, chairman of the regents committee of the State Museum, presided, and the speakers were President John H. Finley on behalf of the university and the educational system of the state; Senator Henry M. Sage on behalf of the state government; Doctor Francis Lynde Stetson on behalf of the people; the Honorable Charles D. Walcott, speaking as a representative of science in its broadest sense, and Director John M. Clarke on behalf of the museum.

In the evening the principal address was by Colonel Theodore Roosevelt, who spoke under the title "Productive Scientific Scholarship," and gave an interesting speech to a large audience. Colonel Roosevelt was introduced by Governor Charles S. Whitman, who very happily set forth the value of the research work of the scientific corps attached to the museum. The evening exercises were felicitous and successful throughout, and were followed by a reception in the halls of the museum. Colonel Roosevelt's address on this occasion, or the part of it that related especially to his scientific theme, has been already printed in *SCIENCE*, and all the addresses of the occasion will be published as a bulletin of the university.

#### SCIENTIFIC NOTES AND NEWS

PROFESSOR FRANK D. ADAMS, of McGill University, has been elected president of the Geological Society of America. Dr. Charles P. Berkey, of Columbia University, continues as acting secretary, in the absence in the Arctic regions of Dr. E. O. Hovey.

OFFICERS of the Mathematical Association of America elected at the New York meeting, on December 29, are: *President*, Florian Cajori, Colorado College; *Vice-presidents*, Oswald Veblen, Princeton University, and D. N. Lehmer, University of California; *Secretary-treasurer*, W. D. Cairns, Oberlin College; *Members of the Council* to serve until January, 1920: E. R. Hedrick, University of Missouri; Helen A. Merrill, Wellesley College; R. E. Moritz, University of Washington; D. E.